

AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY.

AUGUST, 1872.

CARDINAL MEZZOFANTI.

SKETCH OF A MAN WHO SPOKE FIFTY-SIX LANGUAGES.

GIUSEPPE GASPARDO MEZZOFANTI was the son of an humble carpenter, and was born at Bologna, September 17, 1774. He was sent to one of the charity schools of his native city, and was destined by his father to follow his own trade, at which it is said that he actually worked in his early boyhood. According to one account, which, although not contained in any of the published memoirs, is derived from a distinguished Anglican dignitary, once a pupil of Mezzofanti, it was while he was thus employed that he attracted the notice of the good old Oratorian, Father Respighi, to whom he was indebted for his release from the uncongenial lot for which his father had designed him.

The place of his work-bench was—as is usual in Italy—in the open air, and under the window of an old clergyman, who privately instructed a number of pupils in Greek and Latin. Young Mezzofanti, overhearing the lessons, caught up the instruction with that marvellous facility which distinguished his after life; and one day surprised his unconscious teacher with the discovery, that, without even having seen a Greek book, and without knowing a single letter of the alphabet, he had acquired an extensive and very accurate knowledge of the great body of the words contained in

the books which he had heard explained in these stolen lectures!

Respighi, who was a most kind-hearted and enlightened man, at once resolved to save for literature a youth of such promise, himself undertook the task of instructing him in Greek and Latin; and on his declaring his preference for the ecclesiastical profession, placed him at the Episcopal seminary of Bologna. The meagre notices of his early career, which have been preserved, contain hardly anything of interest for our present purpose. He learned in college Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic. His first lessons in German were derived from a Bolognese ecclesiastic, the abbate Thiuli.

He picked up French from an old priest of Blois; Swedish, from a Swedish physician who had settled at Bologna; and Coptic from a learned clergyman, the Canonico Mingarelli. And it is plain from what is told of him that then, as later, the faculty of memory was that through which he mainly worked in the acquirement of his linguistic stores. One of his recorded schoolboy feats was to repeat, after a single reading, a folio page of St. John Chrysostome, which he had never before seen; and other exercises of memory, equally ready and equally remarkable, are mentioned among the recollections of his youth.

He was admitted to priest's orders in 1797, and in the end of that year was appointed professor of Arabic in the University. In the following year, however, he was deprived, on refusing to take the oaths required by the new Cisalpine Republic; and, until the year 1804, when he was again restored, he eked out a scanty income by private tuition, especially in the Marescalchi family, where he had the advantage of an extensive and curious library, particularly rich in the department of languages. His fidelity to the papal cause, in the contests between Pius VII and Napoleon, led to his being a second time deprived of his professorship, in 1808, though he was invited by the Emperor to Paris, with most brilliant prospects; but in 1812 he obtained the place of assistant librarian; and on the return of Pius VII from his exile, in 1814, his fidelity, as well as his other distinguished merits, received a more fitting reward, in the

appointment of principal librarian and regent of studies in the university.

To the duties of these offices he devoted himself assiduously, and he refused every solicitation by which it was sought to withdraw him from his native city. Murat endeavored to lure him to Naples; the Grand Duke of Tuscany invited him to Florence; the Emperor Francis held out tempting offers in Vienna; Pius VII employed every instance to obtain his services in Rome. But he was proof against them all, and continued, with the exception of a few brief excursions to Modena, to Mantua, to Leghorn, Pisa, and Rome, to reside in Bologna, until the accession of Gregory XVI in 1831.

It was during these years that he acquired the largest proportion of his knowledge of languages. Very few particulars of the marvelous history are preserved, beyond the names of a few individuals, (none of them possessing any particular interest,) from whom he is said to have received information or instruction in some of the many languages which he contrived to master. His position was not so unfavorable for these studies as might at first sight be supposed. In those days Bologna was the high road to Rome, and few visitors to that capital failed to tarry for a short time at Bologna, to examine the many objects of interest which it contains. To all these Mezzofanti found a ready and welcome access. There were few with whom his fertile vocabulary did not supply some medium of communication; but, even when the stranger could not speak any except the unknown tongue, Mezzofanti's ready ingenuity soon enabled him to establish a system for the interchange of thought. A very small number of leading words sufficed as a foundation; and the almost instinctive faculty with which, by single effort, he grasped all the principal peculiarities of the structure of each new language, speedily enabled him to acquire enough of the essential inflections of each to enter on the preliminaries of conversation. For his marvellous instinct of acquisitiveness this was enough. The iron tenacity of his memory never let go a word, a phrase, an idiom, or even a sound, which it once had mastered.

The circumstance, however, which, more than any other,

tended to procure for him opportunity of extending his knowledge of languages, was the frequent passing and re-passing of troops through the north of Italy, during those years of war and revolution. French and Austrian armies alternately occupied the legations. Russian troops, too, not unfrequently, were to be seen in Bologna. And it need scarcely be said that the armies of Austria and Russia comprise in their motley ranks a larger proportion of languages than those of all the rest of Europe beside. Thus the military hospitals of Bologna, which were seldom untenanted during the last years of the eighteenth and the beginning of the present century, furnished an admirable field for the polyglot studies which had become the passion of Mezzofanti's life. He was at all times most assiduous in his attendance upon the sick; and his priestly ministrations, both within and without the hospitals, afforded him ample opportunities of increasing his store. He was soon marked out as the "foreigner's confessor" (*confessario dei forestieri*) of Bologna; an office which, in Rome and other Roman Catholic cities, is generally entrusted to a staff consisting of many individuals.

Almost every foreigner was sure to find a ready resource in Mezzofanti; though it more than once happened that, as a preliminary step towards receiving the confession of the party applying for this office of his ministry, he had to place himself as a pupil in the hands of the intending penitent, and to inquire from him or her the rudiments of the language in which they were to communicate with each other. The process to him was simple enough. If the stranger was able to repeat for him the Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, or any one of those familiar prayers which are the common property of all Christian countries, or even to supply the names of a few of the leading ideas of the Christian theology, as God, sin, virtue, earth, heaven, hell, etc., it was sufficient for Mezzofanti. In many cases he proceeded to build upon a foundation not a whit more substantial. The services which he thus rendered to the foreign soldiery in the hospitals, earned for him the grateful notice of their officers; and it is said that a lasting friendship with the Russian General Suwarrow origi-

nated in this way, during one of that rude soldier's campaigns in Italy.

His own account of the process by which these various stores were successively gathered, and which is given by the author of a French memoir named at the head of these pages, is very simple and interesting. Mezzofanti, though most liberal and tolerant to all others, was zealously devoted to the duties of his own profession. "I was living at Bologna," he said, "during the war. At that time I was young in the ministry, and used to visit the military hospitals. I met there among the patients, Hungarians, Slaves, Germans, Bohemians, etc., whom, although dangerously ill or wounded, I was unable to confess or to reconcile with the Church. My heart was grieved at the sight. I gave myself up to the study of these languages, and easily acquired enough to make myself intelligible. I needed no more. I began to make my rounds among the sick beds. Some I managed to confess; I talked with others; so that in a short time I had considerably enlarged my vocabulary. With the blessing of God, assisted by my own memory and industry, I came to know not only the language of the countries to which these invalids belonged, but even the dialects of the different provinces."

"The hotel-keepers, too," he added, "were in the habit of apprising me of the arrival of all strangers at Bologna. I made no difficulty, when anything was to be learned, about calling on them, interrogating them, making notes of their communications, and taking instructions from them in the pronunciation of their respective languages. A few learned Jesuits, and several Spaniards, Portuguese, and Mexicans, who resided at Bologna, afforded me valuable aid in learning both the ancient languages and those of their own countries. I made it a rule to learn every new grammar, and to apply myself to every strange dictionary that came within my reach. I was constantly filling my head with new words; and, whenever any new strangers, whether of high or low degree, passed through Bologna, I endeavored to turn them to account, using the one for the purpose of perfecting my pronunciation, and the other for that of learning the familiar words and turns of expression. I must confess, too,

that it cost me but little trouble; for, in addition to an excellent memory, God had blessed me with an incredible flexibility of the organs of speech."¹

By degrees, as his fame extended, travelers from the most distant countries, and speaking the most out-of-the-way tongues, began to visit Bologna, with the express purpose of seeing Mezzofanti. The troubles in Greece and among the Christian populations subject to the Porte, during and before the outbreak of the war of independence, brought many refugee ecclesiastics to Italy. The various revolutions of Spain led to more than one Catalonian and Valencian priest taking up his residence in Bologna. All these and many more were placed under contribution. And it is about this period of Mezzofanti's career that the interesting series of notices, compiled by Mr. Watts,² may be said to commence.

The earliest account of Mezzofanti, which Mr. Watts has found, reaches no further back than November, 1817. It was published in 1819, in Mr. Stewart Rose's "Letters from the North of Italy."

"As this country," he writes, "has been fertile in every variety of genius, from that which handles the pencil to that which sweeps the skies with the telescope; so even in this, her least favorite beat, she has produced men who, in early life, have embraced such a circle of languages as one should hardly imagine their ages would have enabled them to attain. Thus the wonders which are related to one of these, Pico di Mirandola, I always considered fabulous, till I was myself the witness of acquisitions which can scarcely be considered less extraordinary.

"The living lion to whom I allude is Signor Mezzofanti, of Bologna, who, when I saw him, though he was only thirty-six years old, read twenty and wrote eighteen languages. This is the least marvellous part of the story. He spoke all these fluently, and those of which I could judge with the most extraordinary precision. I had the pleasure of dining with him formerly in the house of a Bolognese lady, at

¹ *Esquisse Histor. sur le Card. Messofanti.* Par A. Manavit, p. 104-5.

² On the Extraordinary Powers of Cardinal Mezzofanti as a Linguist, by Thomas Watts, Esq., Vol V., p. iii.

whose table a German officer declared he could not have distinguished him from a German. He passed the whole of the next day with G—— and myself, and G—— told me he should have taken him for an Englishman, who had been some time out of England. A Smyrniote servant who was with me, bore equal testimony to his skill in other languages, and declared he might pass for a Greek or a Turk in the dominions of the Grand Seignior. But what most surprised me was his accuracy ; for, during long and repeated conversations in English, he never once misapplied the *sign* of a tense, that fearful stumbling-block to Scotch and Irish, in whose writings there is always to be found some abuse of these undefinable niceties. The marvel was, if possible, rendered more marvellous by this gentleman's accomplishments and information—things rare in linguists, who generally mistake the means for the end. It ought also to be stated that his various acquisitions had all been made in Bologna, from which, when I saw him, he had never wandered above thirty miles."—[*Letters from the North of Italy*, ii. 54.

It can hardly be necessary to record the testimony of Lord Byron, which has become almost a proverb. There is no certainty as to the date at which this visit, so characteristically described, took place, as it is merely alluded to casually in a letter written to a friend, as one of the memorable events of the writer's life. But we are inclined to think that it must have been early in the noble poet's residence in Italy, and before he had attained much familiarity with Italian. The spelling [Mezzophanti] of Mezzofanti's name, is a solecism against one of the fundamental laws of Italian orthography, into which we could hardly suppose that any one long resident in Italy to have fallen. Probably Byron's visit was not far removed from that of Stewart Rose.

"I don't remember a man amongst them," he says, of foreign literary men generally, "whom I ever wished to see twice, except, perhaps, Mezzophanti, who is a monster of languages, the Briareus of parts of speech, a walking polyglot, and more, who ought to have existed at the time of the tower of Babel, as universal interpreter. He is, indeed, a marvel, unassuming also. I tried him in all the tongues in which I knew a single oath or adjuration to the gods,

against post-boys, savages, Tartars, boatmen, sailors, pirates, gondoliers, muleteers, camel-drivers, vetturini, postmasters, post-houses, post, everything ; and egad, he astonished me—even to my English !”

A year or two later we have an account from what might naturally be presumed to be the severer pen of the celebrated mathematician and astronomer, Baron Von Zach, who saw Mezzofanti during a visit which he made to Bologna, for the purpose of observing the annular eclipse of the sun. In the issue of his scientific Journal “Correspondance Astronomique” for February, 1820, he writes :

“ The annular eclipse of the sun was one great curiosity for us, and Signor Mezzofanti was another. This extraordinary man is really a rival of Mithridates : he speaks thirty-two languages, living and dead, in the manner I am going to describe. He accosted me in Hungarian, and with a compliment so well turned, and in such excellent Magyar, that I was quite taken by surprise and stupefied. He afterwards spoke to me in German, at first in good Saxon (the *Crusca* of the Germans,) and then in the Austrian and Swabian dialects, with a correctness of accent that amazed me to the last degree, and made me burst into a fit of laughter at the contrast between the language and the appearance of this astonishing professor. He spoke English to Captain Smyth, Russian and Polish to Prince Volkonski, not stammering and stammering, but with the same volubility as if he had been speaking his mother tongue, the dialect of Bologna. I was quite unable to tear myself away from him. At a dinner at the cardinal legate’s, Della Spina, his eminence placed me at table next him ;—after having chatted with him in several languages—all of which he spoke much better than I did—it came into my head to address him on a sudden some words of Wallachian. Without hesitation, and without appearing to remark what an out-of-the-way dialect I had branched off to, off went my polyglot in the same language, and so fast, that I was obliged to say to him : ‘ Gently, gently, Mr. Abbé ; I really can’t follow you ; I am at the end of my Latin-Wallachian.’ It was more than forty years since I had spoken the language, or even thought of it, though I knew it very well in my youth, when

I served in an Hungarian regiment, and was in garrison in Transylvania. The professor was not only more ready in the language than I, but he informed me on this occasion that he knew another tongue that I had never been able to get hold of, though I had enjoyed better opportunities of doing so than he, as I formerly had men that spoke it in my regiment.

"This was the language of the Zigans, or Gipsies, whom the French so improperly call Bohemians, at which the good and genuine Bohemians, that is to say, the inhabitants of the kingdom of Bohemia, are not a little indignant. But how could an Italian Abbe, who had never been out of his native town, find means to learn a language that is neither written or printed? In the Italian wars an Hungarian regiment was in garrison at Bologna: the language-loving professor discovered a gipsy in it, and made him his teacher, and with the facility and happy memory that nature has gifted him with, he was soon master of the language, which, it is believed, is nothing but a dialect, and a corrupted one into the bargain, of some tribes of Parias in Hindostan."—(Zach: *Correspondance Astronomique*, vol. iv. pp. 191-2.)

These marvellous details were received with considerable incredulity by some, and were explained away by others as the embellishments of a traveler's tale. Accordingly, the Baron, in a subsequent number of his journal, reiterates the statement, and enters into fuller explanations regarding it. Alluding to the similar doubts which are expressed by some critics as to the truth of the almost equally marvellous statements made by Valerius Maximus, that "Cyrus knew by name every soldier in his army;" and that "Mithridates was master of the languages of the twenty-two nations which were subject to him," the Baron proceeds:

"It may be so; we know nothing about it, and in consequence we will not contradict these critics; but what we know is, that Signor Mezzofanti speaks very good German, Hungarian, Slavonic, Wallachian, Russian, Polish, French and English. I have mentioned my authorities. It has been said that Prince Volkonski and Captain Smyth gave their testimony in favor of this wonderful professor, out of politeness only. But I asked the prince alone, how the pro-

fessor spoke Russian, and he told me he should be very glad if his own son spoke it as well. The child spoke English and French better than Russian, having always been in foreign countries with his father. The captain said : ' The professor speaks English better than I do ; we sailors knock the language to pieces on board our vessels, where we have Scotch and Irish, and foreigners of all sorts ; there is often an odd sort of jargon spoken in a ship ; the professor speaks with correctness, and even with elegance ; it is easy to see that he has studied the language.'

" M. Mezzofanti came one day to see me at the hotel where I was staying ; I happened not to be in my own rooms, but on a visit to another traveler who lodged in the same hotel, Baron Ulmenstein, a colonel in the King of Hanover's service, who was traveling with his lady. M. Mezzofanti was brought to me ; and, as I was the only person who knew him, I introduced him to the company as a professor and librarian of the University. He took part in the conversation, which was carried on in German ; and, after this had gone on for a considerable time, the baroness took an opportunity of asking me aside, how it came to pass that a German was a professor and librarian in an Italian University. I replied that M. Mezzofanti was no German, that he was a very good Italian of the city of Bologna, and had never been out of it. Judge of the astonishment of all the company, and of the explanations that followed ! My readers, I am sure, will not think the testimony of Baroness Ulmenstein to be suspected. The baroness is a thorough German, of a cultivated mind, and herself speaks four languages in great perfection."

The year 1820 is very fertile in such notices. We have another from a Danish writer, M. Molbech, one of the librarians of Copenhagen ; M. Molbech's testimony to Mezzofanti's general attainments is equally honorable with that which he bears to his mastery of languages.

" At last, in the afternoon, I succeeded in meeting one of the living wonders of Italy, the librarian Mezzofanti, whom I had only spoken with for a few moments in the gallery, when I passed through Bologna before ; I now spent a couple of hours with him, at his lodgings in the university

building, and at the library, and would willingly, for his sake alone, have prolonged my stay at Bologna for a couple of days, if I had not been bound by contract with the vetturino as far as Venice. His celebrity must be an inconvenience to him; for scarcely any educated traveler leaves Bologna without having paid him a visit, and the hired guides never omit to mention his name among the first curiosities of the town. This learned Italian, who has never been so far from his birth-place, Bologna; as to Florence or Rome, is certainly one of the world's greatest geniuses in point of languages. I do not know the number he understands, but there is scarcely an European dialect, whether Romanic, Scandinavian, or Sclavonic, that this miraculous polyglotist does not speak. It is said the total amount to more than thirty languages; and among them is that of the Gipsies, which he learned to speak from a gipsy who was quartered with an Hungarian regiment at Bologna.

"I found a German with him, with whom he was conversing in fluent and well-sounding German; when we were alone, and I began to speak to him in the same language, he interrupted me with a question in Danish, 'Hvorledes har det behaget dem i Italien?' ('How have you been pleased with Italy?') After this he pursued the conversation in Danish, by his own desire, almost all the time I continued with him, as this, according to his own polite expression, was a pleasure he did not often enjoy; and he spoke the language, from want of exercise, certainly not with the same fluency and ease as English and German, but with almost entire correctness. Imagine my delight at such a conversation. Of Danish books, however, I found in his rich and excellent philological collection no more than Baden's Grammar, and Hallage's Norwegian Vocabulary, and in the library Haldorson's Icelandic Dictionary, in which he made me read him a couple of pages of the preface, as a lesson in pronunciation. Our conversation turned mostly on Northern and German literature. The last he is pretty minutely acquainted with, and he is very fond of German poetry, which he has succeeded in bringing into fashion with the ladies of Bologna, so that Schiller and Goethe, whom the Romans hardly knew by name, are here read in the

original, and their works are to be had in the library. This collection occupies a finely-built saloon, in which it is arranged in dark presses with wire gratings, and is said to contain about 120,000 volumes. Besides Mezzofanti, there is an under librarian, two assistants, and three other servants. Books are bought to the amount of about 1,000 scudi, or more than £200 sterling a year. Mezzofanti is not merely a linguist, but is well acquainted with literary history and bibliography, and also with the library under his charge. As an author, he is not known, so far as I am aware ; and he seems at present to be no older than about forty. I must add, what perhaps would be least expected from a learned man who has been unceasingly occupied with linguistic studies, and has hardly been out of his native town, that he has the finest and most polished manners, and, at the same time, the most engaging good-nature."

Much more interesting in itself, as well as for its author, is the account given by the celebrated German philologer Frederic Jacobs. It brings us down about five years further than those which we have last been discussing, his visit to Mezzofanti having occurred in August, 1825. Herr Jacobs quotes and confirms the statements which we have already seen, from Baron von Zach's "Correspondence," and proceeds to say : " I was most kindly received by him ; we spoke in German for above an hour, so that I had full opportunity for observing the facility with which he spoke ; his conversation was animated ; his vocabulary select and appropriate, his pronunciation by no means foreign ; and I could detect nothing but here and there a little of the North German accent. He was not unacquainted with German literature ; spoke among other things of Voss's services in the theory of metre, and made some observations on the imitation of the metrical system of the ancients. His opinions were precise, and expressed without dogmatism. This fault, so common among persons of talent, appears quite foreign to him, and there is not a trace of charlatanism about him."

The testimony borne by Herr Jacobs to Mezzofanti's scholarship and philological attainments, even in a department but little cultivated, is of some importance. He pro-

ceeds to describe another peculiarity of his extraordinary faculty, equally deserving of notice. "Not less remarkable are the ease and readiness with which he passes in conversation from one language to another, from the north to the south, from the east to the west, and the dexterity with which he speaks several of the most difficult together without the least seeming effort; and whereas, in cognate languages, the slightest difference creates confusion, so that, for instance, the German in Holland or the Dutchman in Germany often mixes the sister and mother tongues so as to become unintelligible, Mezzofanti ever draws the line most sharply, and his path in each realm of languages is uniformly firm and secure." We may also add Jacob's description of the personal appearance of the great linguist.

"Mezzofanti," writes the German professor, "is of the middle size or rather below it; he is thin and pale, and his whole appearance indicates delicacy. He appears to be between fifty and sixty years old (he was really, in 1825, fifty-one); his movements are easy and unembarrassed; his whole bearing is that of a man who has mixed much in society. He is active and zealous in the discharge of his duties, and he never fails to celebrate mass every day."

It is time, however, to follow Mezzofanti to Rome, which, of course, must be regarded as the chief theatre of his celebrity. While he was at Bologna he had maintained an occasional correspondence on phyleological subjects with Father (afterwards Cardinal) Cappellari, and eventually Pope Gregory XVI. While Cappellari was Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda, his esteem for his correspondent was increased by an act of disinterestedness on the part of Mezzofanti which came to his knowledge, namely, his declining the offer of (to him) a considerable sum of money voted and sent to him by the congregation, in acknowledgment of some literary services rendered by him to the Propaganda; and after Cappellari's elevation to the Pontificate, he set his heart upon drawing the "Bolognese prodigy" to Rome. An occasion presented itself in the end of 1832. After the failure of the attempted revolution in the Papal States during that year, a deputation from the legation of Bologna was sent to Rome, of which Mezzofanti was a member; and the

Pope urged this request so strongly upon him, that, after what his holiness jokingly called a 'regular siege,' (*veramente un assedio*) he consented to the change. Gregory XVI, used afterwards good-humoredly to say, "that this was the only good that resulted from the revolution of Bologna.

Upon his settling in Rome, Mezzofanti's humble interests and wants were generously cared for by his friend and patron. He was appointed to a prebend in St. John Lateran's and afterwards to a canonry in St. Peters, together with the Rectorship of the college of the *Pietrini* attached to that church; and on the transfer of the celebrated Angelo (afterwards cardinal) Mai from the post of Vatican librarian to that of Secretary of the Propaganda, Mezzofanti was installed in the charge of the Vatican library, which he held till 1840, when, in conjunction with Mai, he was elevated to the cardinalate. And even in this, the crowning step of his promotion, the same considerate generosity followed him. Presuming on the slenderness of his friend's resources, the Pope presented him, from the privy purse, with the State equipages and the other details of the outfit usually provided by a new cardinal at his installation.

Mezzofanti continued to enjoy the friendship of Gregory XVI until his death, and was equally beloved by the present Pope, whom he had known before his promotion, and to whom he was tenderly attached. The remaining years of his life were full of honor and distinction, although his change of rank brought little alteration in the simple habits which he had contracted as an humble professor. It is impossible, indeed, to conceive a position more advantageous for his favorite pursuit than that which Mezzofanti now occupied. Where should we find a more "diverse-speaking" crowd than that which annually flocks to the attractive spectacle of the Holy Week at Rome? And even independently of these, what we may call the standing population of Rome is perhaps the most polyglot in the world. Ecclesiastics from every part of the Christian world may be met almost daily in the ante-rooms of the Vatican, or the *segreteria* of the Propaganda. The convents and other religious houses of the city number among their members complexions of every hue and tongues of every variety of intonation;

above all, the college of the Propaganda is in itself a little world, comprising every language and every dialect of the nations in communion with Rome. All these resources were open to Mezzofanti, and he availed himself zealously of them all.

We are enabled, from a very careful and elaborate sketch of Mezzofanti, published in the year 1846, in the well-known Munich journal, "*Historisch Politische Blätter*," to supply some additional details of this portion of his life. The author of this sketch is Guido Gorres, son of the celebrated Roman Catholic professor and publicist of that name, and himself not unfavorably known in German literature. During a protracted residence in Rome, Gorres enjoyed the intimate acquaintance of Mezzofanti, and took every opportunity which presented itself of testing his extraordinary gift by observing him in conversation with foreigners of all varieties of languages. It would hardly interest any of our readers to record the many offices held by him at different times as cardinal, the congregations of which he was a member, or the honors which he received, which occupy a full page of Gorres' memoir. The following account of Mezzofanti's linguistic talent is more to our purpose. It is drawn up, not only with great detail, but, what is equally important, with more regard for scientific arrangement than any of those we have yet seen.

"The vastness of the range of languages which he had mastered borders closely on the incredible; and, what appears hardly less marvellous, this enormous store has not only not produced any Babel-like confusion in his head, but on the contrary lies completely at his command, so that, without the least effort and without any observable interval, he passes from one realm of language to another, as lightly as a bird hops from spray to spray. He is familiar with all the European languages. And by this we understand not merely the old classical tongues and the first-class modern ones; that is to say, the Greek and Latin, the Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German and English; his knowledge embraces also the languages of the second class, namely, the Dutch, the Danish, and Swedish, the whole Slavonic family, the Russian, Polish, Bohemian or Czechish

and Servian, the Hungarian and Turkish; and even those of the third and fourth class, the Irish, Welsh, Albanian, Wallachian, Bulgarian and Illyrian, are equally at his command. On my happening to mention that I had once dabbled a little in Basque, he at once proposed that we should set about it together. Even the Romani of the Alps, and the Lettish, are not unfamiliar to him; nay, he has made himself acquainted with the Lappish, the language of the wretched nomadic tribes of Lapland; although he told me he did not know whether it should be called Lappish or Laplandish. Passing along to Asia, it is true that he does not claim acquaintance with all the dialects of this vast region, with its desolate steppes, and its fallen, degenerate and fast-decreasing population; but nevertheless, even here, there is hardly one of the more prominent languages, especially those which fall within the circle of European intercourse, that has escaped his grasp. Thus he is master of all the languages which are classed under the Indo-German family: the Sanscrit and Persian, the Koordish, the Armenian, the Georgian; he is familiar with all the members of the Semitic family, the Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Samaritan, Chaldee, the Sabaic, and even the Chinese, which he not only reads but speaks. As regards Africa, and its Hamitic races, the recent revival of intercourse with that country, and especially with Egypt and Abyssinia, have facilitated the extension of his acquaintance with its languages. He knows the Coptic, Ethiopic, Abyssinian, Amharic,¹ and Angelese. I cannot from my own knowledge say whether he has acquired any of the native languages of America, except the Californian; but I have been told that even while he was in Bologna he learned some of these from an ex-Jesuit who had sojourned as a missionary on that continent."—[*Historisch Politische Blätter*, 1842, pp. 279–80.

Mezzofanti actually carried out his intentions in reference to the Basque language in both its dialects, and we are able, also, of our own knowledge, to resolve the doubt which Herr Guido Gorres here raises. Mezzofanti had acquired, long before he came to Rome, more than one of the native

¹ The original is *Ancharische*: but we presume it is a misprint.

languages of Central and South America. He spoke the dialects of Mexico and of Brazil. Among the few literary remains which he has left is a Mexican calendar, drawn up by himself, and illustrated by drawings from the pencil of one of his nieces, Signorina Minarelli. The catalogue of his library contains several books not only in Mexican, Brazilian, Peruvian and Chilian, but even in one of the languages of North America—that of the Delaware Indians.¹

Herr Gorres, on his own part, attests the fluency, the precision, and the unexceptionable accent with which the Cardinal spoke German; and he tells, as a curious example of the accuracy of his knowledge of other languages, that a Russian lady of his acquaintance, who had written in Russian to introduce a friend to Mezzofanti, was rallied by him afterwards on the ungrammatical and inelegant style in which she had written, and was forced to acknowledge the particular faults in her composition, which he had pointed out. We, ourselves, remember to have heard the highest testimony to the accuracy and elegance of a letter of his in Portuguese, addressed to the Portuguese ambassador. It was perfect, he declared, even to the nicest conventionalities of the epistolary form in use in Portuguese society.

We shall return hereafter to some of the details of Gorres' account; but, in the meanwhile, we shall add another of Mr. Watts's authorities, an anonymous Russian traveler, who visited Rome a few years later:

"Twice," writes this traveler, "I have visited this remarkable man, a phenomenon as yet unparalleled in the literary world, and one that will scarcely be repeated unless the gift of tongues be given anew, as at the dawn of Christianity. Cardinal Mezzofanti spoke eight languages fluently in my presence: he expressed himself in Russian very purely and correctly; but as he is more accustomed to the style of books than that of ordinary discourse, it is necessary to use the language of books in talking with him for the conversation to flow freely. His passion for acquiring languages is so great, that even now, in advanced age, he continues to study fresh dialects. He learned Chinese not long

¹ See Catalogo della Libreria del Card. Mezzofanti, p. 25.

ago ; and is constantly visiting the Propaganda for practice in conversation with its pupils of all sorts of races. I asked him to give me a list of all the languages and dialects in which he was able to express himself, and he sent me the name of God, written in his own hand, in fifty-six languages, of which thirty were European, not counting their subdivision of dialects ; seventeen Asiatic, also, without reckoning dialects ; five African, and four American. In his person, the confusion that arose at the building of Babel is annihilated, and all nations, according to the sublime expression of Scripture, are again of one tongue. Will posterity ever see anything similar ? Mezzofanti is one of the most wonderful curiosities of Rome."

We have seen that one of the chief opportunities for extending and improving his gift of tongues, which Mezzofanti enjoyed at Rome, was his easy and constant access to the living polyglot, the college of the Propaganda. Nowhere, perhaps, in the world is the diversity of tongues so strikingly exhibited as at the annual academical exercises of this celebrated institution, which are held during the octave of the Epiphany, the special festival of the Propaganda. These exercises consist of declamations, both of prose and of poetry, in each of the languages which are represented among the students actually in the college, and which frequently exceed forty in number. On these occasions, Mezzofanti used to be the life of the assemblage. Miss Mitford has given an interesting account of this performance, derived from the late Roman Catholic Bishop Baines.

" He (Dr. Baines) gave a most amusing account of Cardinal Mezzofanti—a man, in all but his marvellous gift of tongues, as simple as an infant. ' The last time I was in Rome,' said he, ' we went together to the Propaganda, and heard speeches delivered in thirty-five or thirty-six languages, by converts of various nations. Amongst them were natives of no less than three tribes of Tartars, each talking his own dialect. They did not understand each other, but the Cardinal understood them all, and could tell with critical nicety the points in which one jargon differed from the others. We dined together, and I entreated him,

having been in the tower of Babel all the morning, to let us stick to English for the rest of the day. Accordingly, he did stick to English, which he spoke as fluently as we do, and with the same accuracy, not only of grammar, but of idiom. His only trip was in saying, 'That was before the time when I remember,' instead of, 'before my time.' Once, too, I thought him mistaken in the pronunciation of a word. But when I returned to England (continued Dr. Baines) I found that my way was either provincial or old-fashioned, and that I was wrong and he was right.

"In the course of the evening, his servant brought a Welsh Bible which had been left for him. 'Ah!' said he, 'this is the very thing: I wanted to learn Welsh.' Then he remembered it was in all probability not the authorized version. 'Never mind,' he said, 'I think it won't do me any harm.' Six weeks after, I met the Cardinal and asked him how he got on with his Welsh. 'Oh!' replied he, 'I know it now; I have done with it.'"¹—[*Miss Mitford's Recollections of a Literary Life*, vol. ii. p. 203.]

It was not, however, in the mere capacity of a spectator, or even of a patron, that Mezzofanti was known in connection with the exercises of the Propaganda. It was notorious in Rome that he took an active and good-natured part in the revision, and perhaps even the actual preparation, of the compositions intended for delivery. "He was frequently himself," writes Guido Gorres, "the author of these polyglot poems; and there can be no doubt that there never was a poet who essayed his skill in such a variety of tongues. A disinterested act of good nature, truly, for in most cases, with the exception of himself and the individual who is reciting, there is not a soul in the assembly who can understand a word of it, much less appreciate the poetical merit of the composition." We can ourselves bear testimony to the truth of Gorres' statement. The declamations in the Tamil dialect of Hindostanee, recited year after year by an

¹ Mr. Watts, however, adds, "that this statement could not imply that Mezzofanti could speak the language which he had thus acquired from a printed source." Mr. Watts was informed "by Mr. Thomas Ellis, of the British Museum, a Welsh gentleman who saw him more than once in his later years," that he was quite unable to keep up a conversation in the language of the Cymry. Mr. Ellis felt certain that he could not read with facility an ordinary book.

East Indian student of our acquaintance, were invariably written by Mezzofanti.

Those, however, who desired to witness in its full perfection the extraordinary gift of this wonderful man, instead of these formal holiday exhibitions, sought rather, as we have occasionally done, to see him in his ordinary intercourse with the youths of the Propaganda. It was for years his favorite relaxation. In summer he generally spent an hour, in winter an hour and a half, among them; partly for the sake of practice in their various languages, partly as an innocent and instructive recreation. In the free and familiar intercourse which the good Cardinal encouraged and maintained with those youths, there sometimes arose sportive trials of skill, in which their great amusement consisted in endeavoring to puzzle the Cardinal by a confusion of languages, and to provoke him into answering in a language different from that in which he was addressed. The idea of these trials (which reminded us of the old-fashioned game of "cross-question") appears to have originated with the good-humored old Pope, Gregory XVI, soon after Mezzofanti's arrival in Rome. "One day," says M. Manavit, "Gregory the XVI provided an agreeable surprise for the polyglot prelate, and a rare treat for himself, in an improvised conversation in various tongues—a regular linguistic tournament. Among the mazy alleys of the Vatican gardens, behind one of the massive walls of verdure, which, from its peculiar glory, the Pope placed a certain number of the Propaganda students in ambuscade. When the time came for his ordinary walk, he invited Mezzofanti to accompany him; and, as they were proceeding gravely and solemnly, on a sudden, at a given signal, these youths grouped themselves for a moment on their knees before his Holiness, and then, quickly rising, addressed themselves to Mezzofanti, each in his own tongue, with such an abundance of words and such a volubility of tone, that, in the jargon of dialects, it was almost impossible to hear, much less to understand them. But Mezzofanti did not shrink from the conflict. With the promptness and address which were peculiar to him, he took them up singly, and replied to each in his own language with such spirit and elegance as to amaze them all.

Sometimes, however, a new language made its appearance in the Propaganda. In that case it was Mezzofanti's great delight to commence his studies once again. If the language had any printed books—as a Bible, catechism, or similar work—he would learn from the new comer to read and translate them. But if, as more than once occurred, the language was entirely without books, he made the pupil speak or recite some familiar prayer, until he picked up first the general meaning, and afterwards the particular sounds, and what may be called the rhythm of the language. The next step was to ascertain and classify the particles, both affixes and suffixes; to distinguish verbs from nouns, and substantives from adjectives; to discover the principal inflections, etc. Having once mastered the preliminaries, his power of generalising seemed rather to be an instinct than an exercise of the reasoning faculty. With him the knowledge of words led almost without an effort to the power of speaking; and probably the most signal triumph of his career—his mastery of Chinese—was the one which was accomplished at once, latest in life and with fewest facilities. It was so complete, too, that he was able not only to converse freely with the Chinese students in the Propaganda, but even to preach to them in their native language. In the year 1843, he delivered to them in Chinese a comprehensive series of religious instructions; or, to use the technical phrase employed by Roman Catholics, he conducted for them, in Chinese, a spiritual retreat, consisting of the celebrated Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Mezzofanti died on March 15, 1849, in the seventy-fifth year of his age. He was "the greatest linguist the world has ever seen."

THE true felicity of life is to be free from perturbations, to understand our duties towards God and man, to enjoy the present without any anxious dependence upon the future, not to amuse ourselves with either hopes and fears, but to rest satisfied with what we have, which is abundantly sufficient; for he that is so, wants nothing.

OBLIGATORY INSTRUCTION.

HOW shall we reclaim neglected children? With growing faith in moral suasion as our main reliance in preventing absenteeism, I now contend for the authority of the law with its sterner sanctions to fall back upon in extreme cases. When parental pride, interest, or authority fails, and juvenile perverseness is incorrigible, legal coercion should be employed,

When our population was homogeneous, as was the case in the early history of New England, there was little absenteeism from school. All valued education, and, with rare exceptions, all native-born citizens could read and write. "Where were you born?" was the inquiry of Judge Daggett, long the Kent Professor of Law in Yale College, on finding any witness on the stand, or criminal in the dock, who could not read and write; and with only three exceptions, during his long time of judicial service, he never received the answer, "In Connecticut." But recently, immigration has caused startling figures of illiteracy, especially in our large cities. With this ignorance comes indifference to education, for illiteracy involves insensibility to the evils it engenders.

To remedy truancy, we should inquire first for its causes. These are various. So should be the remedies in order to meet each exigency. We should not despair of reclaiming the most desperate. They may be desponding, with no hope of bettering their condition. No pride of character, respect for truth, or even sense of shame—yes, false and profane, and yet we must not give them up as hopeless cases, but with faith in Christian incentives, strive to stir the conscience and win the heart. Though unaccustomed to kindness, such boys are not of course insensible to its influence. The tones of sympathy may touch a chord which will vibrate more sweetly because of its very strangeness. If we will put ourselves in the place of wayward children, so as to appreciate their wants, weakness, and wickedness even, we may tell them not in vain both of the perils they incur and the privileges they neglect. The most forlorn

child I have met, when properly approached, has kindly received friendly counsel and even warning as to his offenses. I can recall many instances of youth thus rescued from the street school who are now virtuous citizens. How amply have such services been compensated by the grateful acknowledgments, or tears of joy, more eloquently showing their cherished remembrance of timely counsel! Neglect of school may usually be traced to parental indifference, intemperance, or other evil home influence. Sometimes poverty, loss of paternal control, orphanage, hard experience of neglect and conscious degradation, are the sources of this mischief. "The street Arabs," the juvenile vagrants and beggars who abound in certain European countries, are the hardest to get to school, or to teach when there. They live in the street, without guardianship and without employment, except such as chance throws in their way. Many specimens of the same sort are now thronging into our large cities.

When poverty detains from school, public or private charity should meet the exigency, supplying the lack of decent clothing and inviting the attendance of the most destitute absentees. In Sweden and other European countries those children whose parents are unable to clothe them are relieved by the parish. Among us, the parents of neglected children, if not vicious, are mostly immigrants. Of the advantages of education they yet know little. A dormant parental pride, if not a sense of their duty as the divinely appointed guardians of their offspring, may be awakened. They may be led to see that education will promote their interest and increase their children's happiness, thrift, and prosperity through life. Personal kindness, tact, and persuasion may thus win those that seem perverse.

My former objections to compulsory attendance were fully removed by observations recently made in Europe. Mingle much with plain people in Germany and other countries where attendance at school is compulsory, I sought in every way to learn their sentiments on this question. After the fullest inquiry in Prussia, especially among laborers of all sorts, I nowhere heard a lisp of objection to this law. The masses everywhere favor it. They say education is a

necessity for all. They prize it and are proud of it. Attendance is voluntary, in fact. Nobody seems to think of coercion. The law is operative, but it executes itself, because it is right and beneficent and commands universal approval. It is only the legal expression of the public will.

Education, more than anything else, has fraternized the great German nation. "Whatever you would have appear in a nation's life, that you must put into its schools," was long since a Prussian motto. The school has there been the prime agent of loyalty. Love of country is the germ it long ago planted in the heart of every child. The fruit now matured gladdens and enriches the whole land. Wherever that lesson is heeded it will enrich the world. Devotion to fatherland is a characteristic sentiment of the German people. Shall such a people with such a history, complain of compulsory attendance? This law itself has been a teacher of the nation. It has everywhere proclaimed the necessity and dignity of the public school. Kings and nobles and ministers of State have combined to confirm and diffuse this sentiment till now it pervades and assimilates all classes.

The absence of complaint about coercive attendance is not due, as some have supposed, to an enforced reticence or restraint. Proofs of the utmost freedom of speech abound. The Prussian military system is a grievous burden to the people. They dread it and bitterly denounce it. The law which takes every young man from his friends, his business and his home for three weary years of military service, is hard, and is freely condemned. Many young families have left their fatherland for America, and many more are now planning to emigrate in order to escape this arbitrary conscription. But even the father who is most aggrieved by the army draft, lauds the school draft.

In various parts of Saxony, I inquired of school directors and others, "Do you have any difficulty in executing the coercive law?" The answers were all substantially the same. "Many years ago," replied one, "there was some opposition. But the results of the law have commended it to all, and they obey it without complaint and almost without exception." The present generation of parents, having themselves experienced its advantages, are its advocates.

Said a resident of Dresden, "A healthy child of school age can hardly be found in this city who has not attended school. Were the question of compulsory attendance to be decided to-morrow in Saxony by a plebiscite, it would be sustained by an almost unanimous verdict. Public opinion is now stronger even than the law. The people would sooner increase than relax its rigor." I nowhere learned of any recent cases of punishment for its infractions. In many places I was assured that the penalty is practically unknown.

The principle of obligatory instruction was advocated by the people before it was enacted by the government. The address of Luther to the municipal corporations in 1554, contains the earliest defense of it within my knowledge, in which he says, "Ah, if a State in time of war can oblige its citizens to take up the sword and the musket, has it not still more the power and is it not its duty to compel them to instruct their children, since we are all engaged in a most serious warfare waged with the spirit of evil which rages in our midst, seeking to depopulate the State of its virtuous men? It is my desire, above all things else, that every child should go to school, or be sent there by a magistrate."

The germ of this system in Prussia is found in a decree of Frederic II. in 1763: "We will that all our subjects, parents, guardians, and masters, send to school those children for whom they are responsible, boys and girls, from their fifth year to the age of fourteen." This royal order was revived in 1794, and in the code of 1819 made more stringent, with severe penalties; first warnings, then small fines, doubling the fines for repeated offenses; and finally imprisonment of parents, guardians and masters.

The penalties now are:

1. Admonition, in the form of a note of warning from the President of the local School Commission.
2. Summons to appear before the School Commission, with a reprimand from the presiding officer.
3. Complaint to the Magistrate by the Commission, who usually exacts a fine of twenty cents, and for a second offence forty cents, for a third eighty cents, doubling the last fine for each repetition of the offence.

The register of attendance and absence are kept with scrupulous exactness by the teachers and delivered to the President of the School Commission. Excuses are accepted for illness, exceedingly severe weather, great distance from school, and sometimes on account of the pressure of work in harvest time.

The objections to such a law, I will consider in another article.—*B. G. Northrop, in Christian Union.*

GOOD MANNERS IN THE TEACHER.

“MUCH of the noblest work in life is done by ill-dressed, awkward, ungainly persons; but that is no more reason for undervaluing good manners and what we call high breeding, than the fact that the best part of the sturdy labor of the world is done by men with exceptional hands, is to be urged against the use of Brown Windsor as a preliminary to appearance in cultivated society.”

So says one of the popular writers of the day, and, considering his words, we are led to ask: Is it true that the tendency is increasing to divorce utility from beauty, strength from loveliness? We think no close observer of the manners and general appearance of the mass of society, will deny that in all that pertains to the amenities of life, we are as a people deteriorating.

If now we meet a man fastidious in dress, and courtly in manners, we at once pronounce him “A gentleman of the old school.” And among those ladies who are considered leaders in society, it is hard to find such real gentlewomen as made up the “Republican Court” of nearly a century ago, or in humble life presided over quiet homes with a grace and dignity which their daughters have not inherited.

It is said these are matters of minor importance; that the cultivation of the mind and heart are the essentials. Philosophy teaches that our natures are three-fold, and embrace capacities for the true, the good, and the beautiful. Is not that, then, an imperfect development which educates a part, and ignores the rest? Not so does God work; he

gives to his creatures not only strength and utility, but symmetry and beauty. If these things are worthy in his regard, are they beneath our notice?

Again, it is said that external beauty is a natural consequence of internal culture, but observation and experience tell us this is not only not true, but often the very reverse—that in proportion as we become absorbed in study we grow careless of outward appearance and observances. The wisest and best are often least attractive, and, by being so, weaken their power for good, for we all acknowledge that, other things being equal, the person of elegant bearing and pleasing address possesses far the greater influence.

This has been fully proven in the history of the woman movement. So long as the cause was represented by awkward and ill-dressed women, the public contented itself with sneering at them, paying little or no heed to the principles they advocated. But when such women as Mrs. Stanton, Julia Ward Howe, Anna Dickinson, and Kate Field, well dressed, graceful, accomplished ladies appeared upon the stage, they at once commanded respectful attention.

If there is so great potency in what is called high breeding, no one can so ill afford to dispense with its aid as the educator. The charm which its possession lends seldom fails to win the admiration and respect of youth, and adds new beauty to the truths which they impart, yet how many teachers there are, in the schools of our State to-day, who are, or appear to be, ignorant of the commonest rules of politeness! Said a young lady—a pupil in the High School of one of our largest towns—"I think it is an insult to us girls to put over us as an example such a woman as our Pre-ceptress! She may know books, but she don't know *decency*," and then followed a catalogue of sins against good manners of which she had been guilty in the presence of her scholars, for which a girl of ten years should have blushed.

Nor is it enough that the teacher is a gentleman or a lady. Example is much, but it is not all. You do not suppose the fact of your being highly educated will alone make a scholar of your pupil; there must be direct teaching. You must point out to him the means by which the end was attained. No more will the fact of your being polite and polished

necessarily make your pupils so. In this, as in the other, there must be instruction, and if it is as desirable as it seems, is it not the duty of every teacher to educate his pupils as faithfully and carefully in this direction as in any other?

Fifty years ago it was as much expected that the teacher would instruct his pupil in the rules of politeness as in those of arithmetic, and the scrupulous observance of those rules was as fully demanded in the teacher, and required in the scholar, as if one was the host and the other the guest in a private parlor. We are apt to think of those days with a certain degree of contempt, as exceedingly old fogy, but we cannot deny that such schools sent out gentlemen and ladies whose bearing was a passport to circles where neither wealth nor learning alone would have admitted them.

Much stress has wisely been laid on the influence of beautiful surroundings, the presence of works of art, flowers, etc., in the school-room. They are valuable as aids, but if we rely on them alone for refinement, they will no more serve our purpose than the presence of ever so extensive an apparatus will of itself teach Natural Philosophy.

Another requisite I would place, even before good manners, in my competitive examination, is that of CLEANLINESS, which is as near godliness now as it ever was. Does the mention of such a thing shock you? Probably you have not seen, as I have, teachers come before their pupils with hands sadly in need of the Brown Windsor of which Dr. Holmes speaks, hair unkempt, linen or lace far from immaculate, and clothes which indicate a long absence of the brush. If, as some such claim, the outward is a type of the inward, there is an unclean spot somewhere in the mind or heart of that individual which unfits him or her to be the guide of youth. In calling attention to these needs, we by no means wish to deprecate the value of the more solid work. These are but the blossoms on the tree. It might serve all the purposes of a tree without them, but how much more lovely is it with them! A diamond is a diamond though in the rough, but its beauty is apparent only when polished.—*The School.*

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

UNITED STATES.—The one unpardonable piece of ignorance in an American school-boy is not to know the number of States and Territories in the Union. It must be confessed that this knowledge has been rendered somewhat difficult by the diplomacy of the past few years, and by the revival in the popular mind of what the Germans call *Erdgier*—or the thirst for annexation. We broke over the wholesome rule (for a republic) that contiguous territory alone should be added by way of enlargement, when we acquired Alaska of the Russians. The national honor (but no other consideration) required that we should break it again in the case of St. Thomas. Had the treaty for it with Denmark been carried through, it would, perhaps, have saved us from coveting San Domingo, and from all the scandal of an unauthorized attempt to gain possession of it by a *coup d'état*. For, let us remark in passing—what is by no means generally known—the most censurable feature of the whole transaction was that the President sent Gen. Babcock to San Domingo, ostensibly merely to survey the scene of the proposed bargain, after his Cabinet had, on the only occasion when he consulted them, pronounced emphatically against annexation; that on Gen. Babcock's return with a signed treaty for which he had pledged the President's support, and which had been negotiated entirely without the knowledge of the Department of State, the President made but a single allusion to it in Cabinet meeting, and being rebuffed dropped the subject and never afterwards introduced it; and that in spite of the known opposition of the Secretary of State, the measure was vigorously pressed upon the Senate by the members of the President's military family. But this by the way. San Domingo being too near, it would seem, a naval station in the South Pacific was the next desideratum, and a protectorate the means selected for obtaining it. The history of this manœuvre is not free from the obscurity which attended the last, but it also would appear to have been undertaken, at least in the first instance, by irresponsible persons without communication with the

State Department. At all events, what is known is, that a Mr. Stewart, President of the "Central Polynesia Land and Commercial Company," and William H. Webb, general manager of the Australian line of steamers, arranged a treaty securing to the United States the exclusive privilege of a naval station on the Island of Tutuila (one of the Navigator group), in return for our protection. The fifth clause is said to read as follows:

"We do acknowledge the absolute authority of the United States of America with regard to all matters whatsoever, and bind ourselves to adopt the common laws of America."

This agreement was signed by two rival kings, uncle and nephew (a minor)—the former a high chief of Savaii, the latter ruling over Upolu, who had been engaged in a desolating warfare upon each other—and by 120 chiefs, as well as the British and American consuls. Subsequently accepted at Washington, it was presented to the Senate for confirmation, and lobbied for by a Capt. Wakeman, who made use of some extraordinary arguments, such as this passage in regard to the women of the islands in question :

"They stand out in their beatific nudity and loveliness, the emblem of the great Master's handiwork in His happiest mood, a combination of beauty, grace and innocence, which no Christian can look upon without the deepest sentiments of love and admiration, both toward the Creator and the created."

It was further urged from the same quarter, that the Australian Company having been the means of bestowing this great benefit on the country, Congress could do no less than grant the subsidy for which it was at that moment a suppliant.

So ingenious a plan merited success, but we are unable to state whether the subsidy was voted, and even have historic doubts about the present ownership of the Samoan Islands. Nevertheless, whether American or native property, Tutuila will doubtless be used as an intermediate stopping-place by the Australian steamers, being in every respect conveniently situated on the direct route to Auckland and Sydney, and nearly enough equidistant between the Sandwich Islands and New Zealand (central long. 170° W., lat. 14° S.) There are two good ports on this island, that of Leone, at the S.W.

extremity, and (the best) Pago-Pago on the south side. It is a high and broken volcanic island, of some 240 square miles, and a population of 8,000. Savaii is the largest and westernmost of the group, containing 700 square miles, and 20,000 inhabitants. Concerning its interior very little is known, and American explorers have now a good opening to distinction. There are two other large islands, Manua, and Upolu (560 square miles, and 25,000 inhabitants); and five smaller ones: Rose, low and uninhabited except by birds, Oloosinga, Ofo, Manono (a missionary station, population 1,100), and Apolima. The navigator (Samoan) Islands thus show a population of nearly 60,000, the natives ranking second among the Polynesians in physical and moral characteristics. They abound in tropical fruits—cocoa-nut, bread-fruit, bananas, yams, sweet-potatoes, pine-apples, coffee, sugar-cane, ginger—with plenty of ratan and bamboo. The group is encircled by one of the branches of the (W. to E.) south equatorial current. It was discovered in the middle of 1768, by Count de Bougainville, during his circumnavigation of the globe, the same who commanded with gallantry under Count de Grasse when his squadron was co-operating with the American forces against those of Great Britain (1781-82).

—A Ship Canal across the Peninsula of Florida is proposed. The route is up the St. John's River, 127 miles, then up the Ocklawaha River for 60 miles. To this point a ship canal for the distance of forty miles must be cut through the swamps to the Amaxara River, at a spot thirty-five miles from its mouth, where it empties into the Gulf of Mexico, near Cedar Keys. By this route 650 miles will be saved on the voyage between the mouth of the Mississippi and the Atlantic ports. As the trade of 1871 between the ports on the Gulf of Mexico and those on the Atlantic Coast amounted to 800,000 tons, it is believed that a handsome revenue would be derived from the proposed canal.

BRITISH AMERICA.—Captain Cameron is to be the surveyor of the boundary line between the United States and the Dominion of Canada through the lakes, forests and Rocky Mountains.

MEXICO.—Here is a fact which needs no comment. Mazatlan, on the west coast of Mexico, receives letters from Europe more quickly than from the capital itself. The courier from Mexico to Mazatlan is twenty-two days in making the trip, while Europe may be reached in twenty-one, via San Francisco and New York. The Mexicans have been for fifteen years endeavoring to build a railroad from Vera Cruz to the capital, working at both ends, but more than a third of it is yet undone. Such are some of the effects of bad government.

CENTRAL AMERICA.—The U. S. Exploring Expedition under Capt. Hatfield is examining three routes for an inter-oceanic canal, with good prospects of success.

SOUTH AMERICA.—There are 60,000 Italians in Buenos Ayres, forming, if we are not mistaken, the majority of the population. The number of French, however, is not inconsiderable. Add to these the Spanish of the Argentine Republic, the Portuguese of Brazil, and their German colonists in Rio Grande do Sul, and Dutch and English in Guiana, and we have a little Europe in the great continent to the south of us. The Spanish Academy at Madrid has invited the Spanish-American men of letters to co-operate in a movement to give unity and stability to their common tongue. A perfect Babel of idioms in the republics of South America renders such a task eminently necessary.

EUROPE.—The *Pomerania*, charged last year with the scientific exploration of the Baltic, began its voyages by passing from Stockholm to Gothland, and thence to the Russian coast, returning to make a new transit towards Memel, and thus traversing in three different directions the deepest part of the sea. The expedition next skirted the Southern coast as far as Holstein, sounding at every step, and determining temperatures and the directions of submarine currents. Nowhere was a greater depth found than 720 feet (German); from 600 to 720 the water was icy cold and adverse to vegetable life and to all but a few animal organisms, to which the brackishness is also fatal. Animal life, in fact, is found concentrated between the surface and a depth of 30 feet, while plants occur not lower than 60. West of Rügen the

water is much more salt than in the eastern basin, and their flora and fauna are to a large extent distinct.

—The superficial area of the Swiss glaciers has been measured and found to be 209,609 hectares (say 500,000 acres), or more than half the whole area of the Federal Republic. Half of these again (103,729) belong to the basin of the Rhone, while but 75,050 go to feed the Rhine, 18,251 the Inn (or Danube), and 12,581 the Po. The upper Rhine is fed from other sources (the Austrian Vorarlberg), but below Basle the river receives no glacier-fed stream. With this "unharvested" but beneficent area of ice may be compared the nearly equal extent of desert about the new capital of Italy—the Roman Campagna, *agro romano*—in all whose extent of 205,000 hectares there exists not a single commune, not a village, not a hamlet with even the shadow of an organized government. It is worked in the most inefficient and shiftless manner by a hundred or so of farmers, the so-called *mercanti di campagna*, holding short leases, and indifferent to permanent improvements. Sooner or later the Government will have to undertake the draining of this vast plain and its marshes, in conjunction with similar improvements in Rome itself.

AFRICA.—The *Herald* of Tuesday, July 2, contained a telegraphic abstract of letters received at its London office, from the explorer Stanley, confirming the truth of previous rumors and dispatches (some of which were considered in the MONTHLY for July) in regard to the meeting of Stanley and Livingstone. A great deal of the cable telegram is occupied with an account of Stanley's difficulties in passing from Ogara to Ujiji, and is in substantial agreement with the tale of the "trusty slave Sa'eed." Stanley was obliged to ally himself with the Arabs in attacking the hostile chief Misambo, and nearly lost his life in the attempt. The time occupied in thus fighting his way through to the lake is not given, but it is stated that Stanley and Livingstone set out in company on the 16th of October, for Unyanyembe, "where they passed twenty-eight days together, exploring the district," and afterwards returned to Ujiji to spend Christmas. The date of Stanley's dispatch with its intelli-

gence is March 14, 1872—no station given. Livingstone declined being taken back to civilization, having still a task before him that would occupy two years. He has in his own mind solved the Nile problem, though further exploration is necessary to demonstrate his correctness. He declares the Chambeze River, which he first crossed in $10^{\circ} 34' S.$, to be the true source of the Nile. The course of it he followed for 700 miles till his supplies gave out, and there remain 180. The dispatch does not say what he believes to be the outlet of the Chambeze, but it can only be the Albert Nyanza of Baker. Lake Tanganyika is not, Dr. Livingstone has ascertained, a feeder of the Nile, or any part of its system. This last is perhaps the only definite and important fact which is not to be found in Livingstone's letter addressed to Lord Clarendon from near Lake Bangweolo in July, 1868. Summing up: we have the Chambeze rising in the plateau to the north of Lake Nyassa, and flowing west into Lake Bangweolo, on or near the 10th parallel of south latitude; then turning north and passing through Lake Moero, when it assumes the name of Lualaba, and flows along the whole western flank of Lake Tanganyika through the country of Rua or Manyema (the seat of the famous underground villages) till it enters the south-western end of Albert Nyanza. The Lake Ulenge, which Livingstone in 1868, thought might either be a lake in the course of the Chambeze (like Moero and Bangweolo) or "a sort of Punjab," is not mentioned in the *Herald's résumé*. Thus far Dr. Charles Beke seems to have got the better of Mr. Keith Johnston, Jr., in reasoning on the general question of the South Central African watershed, so far as the connection of the Chambeze and Lake Tanganyika with the Nile is concerned; and he may be right in maintaining that the River Kassavi is a tributary of the Nile and not of the Congo, as maintained by Johnston. If so, the Kassavi is at least equally a source of the Nile with the Chambeze, and actually rises further south (Dr. Livingstone once crossed it near its head). The marvel of Egypt will then be that the Nile rises within five degrees of the Atlantic as of the Indian Ocean, and traverses some forty-five degrees of latitude to empty itself in the Mediterranean. Stanley had reached Aden, July 11.

Bibliography.—BADEN-POWELL, GEO. S. *New Homes for the Old Country. Personal Experience in Australia and New Zealand.* London, 1872. (See review in the *Athenæum* of June 1.)—BALLANTYNE, R. M. *The Pioneers: a Tale of the Western Wilderness; illustrative of the Adventures and Discoveries of Sir Alexander Mackenzie.* London, 1872.—BOWDEN, T. A. *Geographical Outlines of New Zealand.* London, 1872.—EDEN, CHARLES H. *My Wife and I in Queensland. An Eight Years' Experience in the above Colony, with some account of Polynesian labor.* London, 1872. (See review in the *Athenæum* of June 1.)—MONEY, CHARLES L. *Knocking About New Zealand.* London, 1872.—RAYMOND, ROSSITER W. *Statistics of Mines and Mining in the States and Territories West of the Rocky Mountains.* Washington, 1872.—RUSDEN, G. W. *The Discovery, Survey and Settlement of Port Philip.* London, 1872.

Periodical Literature.—The *Lakeside Monthly* (Chicago) for June: "Some California Savages,—II.," by Stephen Powers. *Cornhill Magazine* (London) for June: "A Tour in North-east Anatolia, Asia Minor," by W. Gifford Palgrave. Consult when reading this the maps of Upper Armenia, showing the route of Xenophon and the Ten Thousand, in Nos. 24 and 29 of the *Journal of the Geographical Society of Berlin.*) *Every Saturday*, June 29 and July 6: "Damascus" and "Palmyra," by Capt. Richard F. Burton (from *Cassell's Magazine*.)

—The medals of the Royal Geographical Society for the encouragement of geographical science and discovery, were presented May 27, as follows: the Founders' Medal to Colonel Henry Yule, C. B., for his three great works, "A Mission to the Court of Ava," "Cathay, and the Way Thither," and "Marco Polo." The Patron's or Victoria Medal to Robert Berkeley Shaw, for his journeys in Eastern Turkestan, enabling us, among other things, to fix the longitude of Yarkand. A gold watch to Lieut. G. C. Musters, R. N., now traveling in America, for his adventurous journey in Patagonia through 960 miles of latitude, of which 780 were previously unknown to Europeans. And £25 to Karl Mauch, for his explorations in South-eastern Africa during many years.

Obituary.—Friedrich Gerstäcker, who died in Brunswick, May 31, was born in Hamburg May 16, 1816. He was the son of a tenor singer, whose engagements compelled him to move from place to place, so that Gerstäcker was a wanderer almost from his birth. His uncle, who took charge of him after his father's death, was a bass singer at the theatre in Brunswick. The boy was bred to business, but found it not to his liking, and, in the spring of 1837, improved his opportunity to come to New York, where he for a time contented himself with menial service, till he raised the means to proceed westward and down the Mississippi. He visited this country twenty years later, having meantime traversed South America, the Malayan Archipelago, Australia, Central America, and even Nubia and Abyssinia. These experiences furnished him with the amplest materials for narratives and works of fiction, in which his fertility was extraordinary. The last work on which he was engaged was a tale of the Orinoco. He was not an explorer nor a savant, but he did much to turn the minds and the feet of his countrymen to the New World. Personally, he was a man of great simplicity and gentleness of character.

LIFE.—The mere lapse of years is not life. To eat and drink and sleep ; to be exposed to darkness and the light ; to pace around the mill of habit and turn the wheel of wealth ; to make reason our book-keeper, and turn thought into an implement of trade—this is not life. In all this, but a poor fraction of the consciousness of humanity is awakened ; and the sanctities still slumber which make it most worth while to be. Knowledge, truth, love, beauty, goodness, faith, alone give vitality to the mechanism of existence. The laugh of mirth, which vibrates through the heart ; the tears which freshen the dry wastes within ; the music which brings childhood back ; the prayer that calls the future near ; the doubt that makes us meditate ; the death which startles us with its mystery ; the hardships which force us to struggle ; the anxiety that ends in trust—these are the true nourishments of our natural being.

"CONSIDER ME SMITH."

A GOOD story is told of Dr. Caldwell, formerly of the University of North Carolina.

The doctor was a small man, and lean, but hard and angular as the most irregular of pine knots.

He looked as though he might be tough, but did not seem strong. Nevertheless, he was, among the knowing ones, as agile as a cat, and in addition, was by no means deficient in a knowledge of the "manly art."

Well, in the Freshman Class of a certain year was a burly beef mountaineer of eighteen or nineteen. This genius conceived a great contempt for old Bolus's physical dimensions, and his soul was horrified that one so deficient in muscle should be so potential in his rule.

Poor Jones, that is what we call him, had no idea of moral force. At any rate, he was not inclined to knock under and be controlled despotically by a man he imagined he could tie and whip. At length he determined to give the old gentleman a genteel private thrashing, some night, in the College Campus, pretending to mistake him for some fellow-student.

Shortly after, on a dark and rainy night, Jones met the doctor crossing the Campus. Walking up to him, abruptly:

"Hello, Smith ! you rascal !"

And with that he struck the old gentleman a blow on the side of the face that nearly felled him.

Old Bolus said nothing, but squared himself, and at it they went. Jones's youth, weight, and muscle made him an ugly customer, but after a round or two the doctor's science began to tell, and in a short time he had knocked his antagonist down, and was astraddle of his chest, with one hand on his throat, and the other dealing vigorous cuffs on the side of the head.

"Ah ! stop ! I beg pardon. Doctor, Doctor Caldwell—a mistake—for Heaven's sake, doctor !" he groaned. "I really thought it was Smith !"

The doctor replied with a word and a blow alternately.

" It makes no difference ; for all present purposes consider me Smith."

And it is said that old Bolus gave Jones such a pounding, that he never made another mistake as to personal identity.

COMMENCEMENT DAY.

THE *Sibyl*, published in connection with a young ladies' college, prints this affecting ballad, set to the tune of "Ten Little Injuns :"—

Ten little Seniors sitting in a line,
One goes up and then there are nine ;
They all go up and they all come down,
Each in her long white trailing gown.

Chorus :—One little, two little, three little Seniors,
Four little, five little, six little Seniors,
Seven little, eight little, nine little Seniors,
Ten little Senior girls.

They all go up in a pretty little line,
Each one thinking, " Ah, ain't this fine ?"
A pretty little ring they make around the President,
He wears a black robe, looks tearful and hesitant.

Chorus :—Ten little parchments tied up with white,
Ten little tears that dim their sight,
Ten little handkerchiefs pressed to the noses,
Ten more tears when the Latin speech closes.

Now they're (*recitative* :)

One little, two little, three little 'lumnæ,
Four little, five little, six little 'lumnæ,
Seven little, eight little, nine little 'lumnæ,
Ten little 'lumnæ girls.

TRAVELING STONES.—Our readers have doubtless heard of the famous traveling-stone of Australia. Similar curiosities have recently been found in Nevada, which are described as almost perfectly round, the majority of them as large as a walnut, and of an irony nature. When distributed upon

the floor, table, or other level surface, within two or three feet of each other, they immediately began traveling toward a common centre, and there huddled up in a bunch like a lot of eggs in a nest. A single stone, removed to the distance of three and a half feet, being released, at once started off, with wonderful and somewhat comical celerity to join its fellows ; taken away four or five feet, it remained motionless. They are found in a region that is comparatively level, and is nothing but bare rock. Scattered over this barren region are little basins, from a foot to a rod in diameter, and it is in the bottom of these that the rolling stones are found. They are from the size of a pea to five or six inches in diameter. The cause of these stones rolling together is doubtless to be found in the material of which they are composed, which appears to be loadstone or magnetic iron ore. "Rolling stones gather no moss."—*Scientific American.*

W H A T I S D I R T ?

OLD DR. COOPER, of South Carolina, used to say to his students, "Don't be afraid of dirt, young gentlemen. What is dirt? Why, nothing at all offensive, when chemically viewed. Rub a little alkali upon the dirty grease spot on your coat, and it undergoes a chemical change and becomes soap ; now rub it with a little water and it disappears. It is neither grease, soap, water nor dirt. That is not a very odorous pile of dirt you see yonder; well, scatter a little gypsum over it and it is no longer dirty. Everything like dirt is worthy our notice as students of chemistry. Analyze it; it will separate into very clean elements. Dirt makes corn, corn makes bread and meat, and that makes a very sweet young lady, that I saw one of you kissing last night. So after all, you were kissing dirt, particularly if she whitened her face with chalk or fuller's earth; though I may say that rubbing such stuff upon the beautiful skin of a young lady is a dirty practice. Pearl powder I think is made of bismuth, nothing but dirt. Lord Palmerston's fine definition of dirt

is 'matter in the wrong place.' Put it in the right place and we cease to think of it as dirt."

CHILDREN'S QUICK APPREHENSION.

GROWN persons are apt to put a lower estimate than is just on the understanding of children; they rate them by what they know, and children know very little, but their capacity of comprehension is very great; hence the continual wonder of those who are unaccustomed to them at the "old-fashioned ways" of some lone little one who has had no playfellows, and at the odd mixture of folly and wisdom in its sayings. A continual battle goes on in a child's mind between what it knows and what it comprehends. Its answers are foolish from partial ignorance, and wise from extreme quickness of apprehension. The great art of education is so to train this last faculty as neither to depress nor over-exert it. The matured mediocrity of many an infant prodigy, proves both the degree of expansion to which it is possible to force a child's intellect, and the boundary which nature has set to the success of such false culture.

INDIA RUBBER OVER-SHOES.—Before 1821 the rubber had been imported only in the form of curiosities, such as crocodiles, turtles, and other objects. A sea captain at that time brought, among other devices, some rubber wrought in the shape of small shoes, and gave them as a present to an intelligent boy. They were closed over the top, and our hero cut them open to find only some clay within in the forms of lasts. His next desire was to put them on his feet, but as they would not stretch enough, he used boiling water to soften them, and then succeeded in his purpose. To color them he used ink which soon washed off, but finally hit upon the plan of smoking them up in the chimney. He then had complete the first pair of india-rubber shoes ever used in this country, and his success was the beginning of a business which has now immense proportions.—*Scientific Am.*

EDUCATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE several Educational Associations are now holding successful Conventions. Most of them we have already fully announced. We will repeat them in their order, making fuller mention of such as have had only a passing notice.

THE NEW YORK STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION, at Saratoga Springs, July 23d, 24th, and 25th.

THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION, Boston, August 6th, 7th and 8th.

THE third annual convention of the GERMAN AMERICAN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION will be held from July 31st to August 3d, at Hoboken, N. J., in the Stevens' Institute of Technology.

THE annual meeting of the UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION will be held in Albany on the 6th, 7th and 8th days of August.

This will be the ninth annual meeting. It is believed that these meetings have been of great service to the cause of higher education in this State, and it is hoped that they may hereafter be made still more interesting to those who attend, and more beneficial to the cause for which they are called.

It is proposed that short papers on original or new matter, in the various departments of Academic and University education, be presented. There are, doubtless, many Presidents and Professors of Colleges and Principals of Academies who have useful matter of this kind, which has come to them as the result of their studies and experience, which they would be glad of an opportunity like this to bring before their fellow laborers in this field, and through them to the notice of the public.

Each paper should be so condensed as not to occupy over twenty-five or thirty minutes in the reading. An opportunity will then be given for discussing the subject of the paper, and the paper itself will, on the approval of the Executive Committee, be published, as soon after the meeting

of the Convocation as arrangements can be made to this effect.

The subjects of papers proposed to be read should be communicated to the Secretary at an early day. W. D. WILSON, Chairman of Exec. Committee; S. B. WOOLWORTH, Secretary.

A REMARKABLE GATHERING OF TEACHERS.—A great meeting of German schoolmasters was lately held in Hamburg, at which 5,100 teachers of all grades were present, from the director of a gymnasium down to the village master of the birch. A gathering of this character in Germany is so completely unlike any meeting of teachers in this country, that it is difficult to institute a comparison; yet there are some points in the proceedings at Hamburg which might furnish hints to our educators. For example, it was argued that "the pedagogic art must be so practiced that Germany shall become a people of poets, thinkers and schoolmasters," and that the village school is "the foundation of all progress;" while one enthusiastic orator exalted the common school above the university, and insisted that the general education of the people is the secret of national prosperity and progress. It is unnecessary to prove to the intelligent American that the public school is entitled to his heartiest support—for that was acknowledged long ago—but it is not beneath us to consider the Germans' theory of enlarging the field of educational activities. Our common school system is capable of almost infinite expansion, to meet the increasing wants of our people, to keep pace with the progress of science and of art, and to develop in the minds of the young the laudable ambitions which make the American citizen what he is. We may not become a nation of "poets, thinkers and schoolmasters," according to the German notion of a well-educated people, but we can at least amend and enlarge our methods of popular education so as to adapt them alike to our present and our future needs. American educators are pondering upon these questions, and even the extravagances of foreign teachers offer suggestions which should not be overlooked.—*New York School Journal.*

CURRENT PUBLICATIONS.

ONE part, at least, of the oft-repeated prophecy has come to its fulfilment in our day; for a strong and general impulse in the thinking world seems to be turning the hearts of the children to the fathers, and leading us to look up our origin and relations in the far away past. A new spirit breathes through Ancient History; its great characters no longer stalking about like the *dramatis personæ* of the old Morality Plays, with their abstract names—"Ambition," "Cruelty," "Rapacity" and such like—affixed to their garments, begin to appear in human flesh and blood—to have life, motion and human-like relations. Those lighter touches of nature which make the whole world kin—the little Egyptian child upon its mother's knee, or playing on the floor with its dolls, the guest temperately smelling at a lotus-blossom, while the dangerous cup went round, the amused smile on the face of an Assyrian king while receiving tribute of apes from an Ethiopian embassy—these and many other minor traits of history, serve to put us on familiar terms with the life of the past. We are looking through stronger lenses, and many thanks are due to the experts whose patient industry has prepared them for our use.

The Champollions, Rosellinis Bottas, and Layards, delving amid the rubbish of old civilizations; Oppert serving as a common soldier in the East, in order to pursue his observations; Sir Henry Rawlinson uniting the bravado of a school-boy to the zeal of a *savant*, and suspending himself for weeks between heaven and earth, in order to copy the words of "Darius the King" from their original table of rock; the not less arduous toil of the Grotfends, Burnoufs and others, in unraveling the mysteries of primitive penmanship; all have their share in the great work of substituting exact and certain knowledge for the vague conjecture, or at best, second-hand and irresponsible statements, that have constituted too much of the material of history. So long, for instance, as we knew the Persians only through the medium of Greek historians, who wrote either with the prejudice of national animosity, with the servility of the

courtier, or with the visionary prepossessions of the *doctrinaire*, so long Persian kings and satraps were merely lay-figures for the exhibition of gorgeous drapery, or royal Bluebeards, compact of human and impossible passions. As might have been expected, our modern explorers have extinguished the stage-lights, and made these ancient worthies and unworthies appear more human, if occasionally less picturèsque, in the broad glare of day.

After all, there were, and are, the same sort of heart-beats, most likely, under Tyrian purple and sad-colored diagonals, togas and frock-coats, embroidered chlamys and flowery Dolly Vardens. The epigrams that amused Roman society at the expense of the dictator of the moment, or of that Ring of Bologna which called itself a Triumvirate, were drawn from the same inexhaustible armory which supplies our modern antagonists by pen and picture of judicial iniquity in high places. *Caenum non animum, mutant.*

If it be objected that the familiar example of pagan times is of doubtful edification to youth in the Christian ages, we are not afraid to reply that real and sufficient enlightenment is always safe. The danger lies in half-lights, and the bewilderment of partial vision. The vicious examples in ancient records—too far away to be contagious—are simply disgusting, while the immortal stimulus of brave and virtuous deeds, such as that which makes every man feel himself a Greek at the name of Marathon, loses nothing by ages of removal.

It cannot be claimed that the greater number of our school text-books of history are adapted to fire the minds of ingenuous youth with either emulation or delight. Most of them were written before the researches of the last quarter of a century had amended our conceptions of Egypt and the East. Their Ninuses and Pharaohs are, in too many cases, mere pretenders, and must hide their diminished heads before the real monarchs, who are bearing testimony to their own identity by irrefutable proofs. Among these usurpers it is curious to find Semiramis—not Sammурамит, the “Isabella of Mesopotamia,” who probably lent her supposititious elder sister all the robes in which she has hitherto made a royal appearance in history—but the Semiramis of the Greek Eastern romances, the surprising lady who re-

built Babylon and afterwards flew away in the form of a dove! It is but recently, in fact, that Mommsen and Curtius in Germany, Lenormant in France, Arnold and Rawlinson in England, have contributed their delightful works to place the results of learned investigations within the reach of ordinary readers. The next step, from the library to the school-room, must soon be taken. The generation now coming forward justly claim the legacy of all new results. If we guide these youthful seekers by pure and truthful lights we are promoting a disciplined culture innately powerful in its immunity from the wastefulness of unfaithful teaching. Historical study particularly should be shaped under such injunctions.

Mr. Thalheimer's new book ⁽¹⁾ is the pioneer of a new dispensation. Without underrating the labors of others in the same field, we heartily endorse this manual as well in the fascinating yet truthful stories of the more ancient monarchies, as in the faithful portraiture of Greek or Roman civilization.

The presentation of history that but yesterday was hidden in mysterious hieroglyphics, or literally buried beneath desert sands, has an inevitable suggestion of novelty. Yet we find here a strict conformity with late developments in archeology, and an authentic character which classes it as a reliable compendium of all that is known to-day of the nations of antiquity.

In this, as in every department of human knowledge, there is an unsatisfied spirit of inquiry ever propounding and solving new problems. This unending restlessness is constantly widening the scope of exact knowledge.

It is for educators especially to take prompt and thorough cognizance of achievements about them, and to derive and communicate the enthusiasm of material and intellectual enterprise.

MESSRS. HARPER & BROTHERS have published a handsome "Student's Greek Grammar," by Dr. George Curtius, Professor in the University of Leipzig. It is edited by Dr. William Smith, of London.—"The School and the Army,"

(1) *A Manual of Ancient History.* M. E. Thalheimer. Wilson, Hinkle & Co., 137 Walnut St., Cincinnati; 28 Bond St., New York.

in Germany and France, with a Diary of Siege Life in Versailles, by Brevet Major-General W. B. Hazen, U. S. A., is a faithful record of active observation in Europe, during the late Franco-Prussian War.—“Is it True?” is a little volume of curious and wonderful tales, collected by the author of “John Halifax, Gentleman.”—“The Golden Lion of Granpere,” is a novel by Anthony Trollope, and is receiving a large share of popular attention.

MESSRS. WILSON, HINKLE & CO. have added to their extended Educational Series, “McGuffey’s New Juvenile Speaker.” It contains more than two hundred exercises, original and selected, for reading and speaking. The six peculiar features claimed for it are worthy the consideration of teachers.—“A Test Spelling-Book,” for the use of advanced classes, by W. D. Henkle. Besides the more than four thousand words given, there are a score or more of judicious dictation exercises.—Also the “Electric Primary Copy Book.”

MESSRS. IVISON, BLAKEMAN, TAYLOR & CO., have issued “Questions for Written Examinations,” the same being intended as an aid to candidates for Teachers’ Certificates, and a hand-book for Examiners and Teachers, by John Swett. We have no doubt about the practical value of this little work.—“Word-Book of English Spelling,” oral and written, by William Swinton. The book is designed to attain practical results in the acquisition of the ordinary English vocabulary, and to serve as an introduction to word-analysis.

MR. E. STEIGER has just published Mrs. Krieger’s book entitled “The Child, its Nature and Relations,” an Elucidation of Froebel’s Principles of Education. It is a free rendering of the German of the Baroness Marenholtz-Bülow. It is printed on heavy tinted paper, tastefully bound in cloth, gilt top, price \$1.00.

HALF-HOUR RECREATIONS IN POPULAR SCIENCE is the title of a series of valuable pamphlets on Scientific subjects, edited by Dana Estis, and published by Lee & Shepard. No. 4, which has just appeared, is devoted to the subject of “Spectrum Analysis Discoveries.”

THE King of Denmark has offered a prize of one thousand dollars for the best history of the United States of America since the civil war.

CAPTAIN BURTON, the English traveler, has gone to Iceland, upon which country, its language and history, he is about to produce an important work.

MISCELLANEA.

THERE are 900 teachers in the provinces of Italy. Of these 366 are bachelors.

A PETRIFIED TURTLE has been dug up in Iowa from a depth of forty feet; and a petrified fish, eight feet long and six feet in girth, has been disinterred in Kansas.

THE taste for emotion may become a dangerous taste; we should be very cautious how we attempt to squeeze out of human life more ecstasy and paroxysm than it can well afford.—*Sidney Smith.*

THE third annual catalogue of the officers and students of the University of Deseret, (Utah) is a curiosity. Of the whole number of students, 580, catalogued in four classes as gentlemen, ladies, boys, and girls, the larger proportion come from fifteen to twenty families. There are thirty-seven of the name of Young, twenty of the name of Wells, and from eight to fifteen of the same family name is a common occurrence.

A BRIGHT little girl, having been desired to write a sentence introducing the word "carrion," presented the following to her teacher: "Bad children often carri-on in church when they ought to be quiet."

A PARADISE for geologists is being opened up at Arapahoe station, on the Kansas Pacific, where a well-digger, now at the depth of 400 feet, has been for several days penetrating beds of fossil shale, filled with baculites, ammonites, and a general variety of creatures with long names. Two hundred feet above, he passed through a thick oyster bed, and

at the depth of 389 feet took out the upper jaw of a reptile with tusks an inch in length.

THE gold yield of California is now surpassed by the silver yield of Nevada.

THE AIR IN SCHOOL-ROOMS.—Dr. Breiteng in Basel, Switzerland, has examined the air of school-rooms in that city, in order to establish how far the complaints were well-founded, which had been so often expressed with regard to the injurious quality of the air in school-rooms. We give below some of the results of this investigation for a room of 8,542 cubic feet capacity, and a surface of 111 square feet, for door and windows. During the trial it contained sixty-four children.

<i>Time.</i>		<i>Amount of Carbonic Acid.</i>
8 A. M.,	at the beginning of test,	2.48 per cent.
9 "	at the close of the test,	4.18 "
10 "	before recess,	6.87 "
11 "	at the close of recitation,	8.11 "
1.45 P. M.,	before lecture,	5.30 "
3 "	before recess,	7.66 "
4 "	close of school,	9.36 "

It must be remembered that ordinary pure air contains only one part in two thousand five hundred, or four one-hundredths of one per cent. of carbonic acid, and that so much as even one per cent. is decidedly injurious.

INDIA RUBBER INEXHAUSTIBLE.—The belt of land around the globe, 500 miles north and 500 miles south of the equator, abounds in trees producing the gum of India rubber. They can be tapped, it is stated, for twenty successive seasons without injury; and the trees stand so close that one man can gather the sap of eighty in a day, each tree yielding, on an average, three tablespoonfuls daily. Forty-three thousand of these trees have been counted in a tract of country thirty miles long by eight wide. There are in America and Europe more than 150 manufactories of India rubber articles, employing some 500 operatives each, and consuming more than 10,000,000 pounds of gum a year, and the business is considered to be still in its infancy. But to whatever extent it may increase, there will still be plenty of rubber to supply the demand.